



J.A. HINES

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 42ND ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

**Testimony Before the Senate Committee on Public Health, Senior
Issues, Long Term Care and Privacy in Support of Assembly Bill 717
March 12, 2008**

Good morning. I want to thank Chairman Carpenter for scheduling such a quick hearing on this very important piece of legislation, Assembly Bill 717. I am sorry I am not able to appear before the committee in person.

I also want to thank Senator Robson for her leadership on this very important issue and I am honored to join her in this effort to require fire safe cigarettes be sold in Wisconsin.

My comments will be brief, because I believe this bill speaks for itself.

We know that cigarettes are the leading cause of home fire fatalities in the United States. We know that requiring the sale of self-extinguishing cigarettes greatly reduces the number of fatalities caused by unattended cigarettes. In my mind, that is reason enough to pass this bill.

The bill is supported by fire fighters and EMT's from around the state, and even Phillip Morris has registered in favor of this proposal. In fact, no organizations have registered against AB 717 with the Government Accountability Board.

As I have stated many times, Wisconsin has always been a national leader when it comes to public health and this bill is the perfect example of that. I would urge the committee and the entire Senate to join Senator Robson and me and pass this bill as soon as possible.





Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs' Association, Inc.

Together We Can Make A Difference

- Education
- Prevention
- Safety
- Suppression
- EMS

DATE: March 12, 2008

TO: Committee on Public Health, Senior Issues, Long Term Care and Privacy

FROM: Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs' Association

RE: Please Support Assembly Bill 717

The Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs' Association is asking for your support of Assembly Bill 717. The Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs' Association has worked long and hard advocating "Safe Cigarette" legislation in Wisconsin. Our members have experienced the destruction to property, injuries and untimely deaths in fires caused by the careless use of cigarettes.

The 2002 – 2005 National Fire Protection Association report lists smoking related fires in homes and multifamily buildings as the number 3 cause of fires but it is the number 1 cause of civilian deaths in the same fires. The 2004 Wisconsin Burning report provides us with the most recent statistics on fire causes in Wisconsin. The leading cause of fires in 1 and 2 family buildings was smoking. The leading cause of fires in multifamily (apartment buildings) buildings was smoking. The leading cause of fires in restaurants and bars was smoking. These stats indicate why we need "Safe Cigarette" legislation in Wisconsin.

The Wisconsin Fire Chiefs Association has an additional interest in reducing smoking related fire and that is reducing injuries and deaths to our firefighters. Nationwide the fire service has more firefighters killed in residential fires than any other type of fire and residential fires are where we find the majority of fires caused by careless use of smoking materials.

Please support Assembly Bill 717 and help the Wisconsin Fire Service prevent fires from the careless use of smoking materials. If you have any questions please contact David Bloom, Legislative Liaison, Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs' Association at 608-444-3324.

2120 Fish Hatchery Rd. • Madison, WI 53713
Phone: 608-210-7261 • Fax: 608-210-7235
Email: bloomd@town.madison.wi.us